



# 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

July 2016

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## THE AMERICA I ONCE KNEW (AND HOPE TO SEE AGAIN)

By: Randi Hain | July 4, 2011  
[www.integratedcatholiclife.org](http://www.integratedcatholiclife.org)

Reminiscing seems to go hand in hand with getting older. When I slow down enough to look at life through the eyes of my children, I see a world vastly different from the one in which I grew up. As a product of Generation X, my age group may be the last to remember a childhood without electronic games and very little television. Our parents didn't worry as much back then about watching our every move and we were free to play with our friends all day and only come home for dinner. There was a trustful innocence in what I perceive back then to have been a much safer and kinder world. There seemed to be less gray area in those days and there were accepted lines you did not cross. Our country's leaders, while far from perfect, seemed to have had the national interest at heart and there was less partisan bickering and divisiveness. Times have certainly changed.



I am writing this from a point of view that I hope transcends left vs. right and liberal vs. conservative, because I am very worried about America. Our country is sick and going down the wrong path. I think deep down, we all know this is true, although we may disagree as to the causes. Increasingly, politicians are staking out positions reflective of the fringe elements of their respective parties. The media has exchanged neutral objectivity for bias and partisanship (we miss you Walter Cronkite and Tim Russert!). Who is left to stand up for what is right except average citizens like you and me? In the interest of full disclosure, my perspective and viewpoint is that of a practicing Catholic and an independent conservative. But, regardless of your faith or political affiliation, I hope you will find much to agree with in what I am about to share.

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# OVERVIEW FOR THE MONTH

[www.catholicculture.org](http://www.catholicculture.org)

The month of July is dedicated to The Precious Blood of Jesus. The entire month falls within the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical color green.

The Blood that coursed through the veins of Christ was a part of that Sacred Humanity made possible by the maternity of Mary, whose parents, St. Joachim and St. Anne are honored this month. (July 26). Our Lord's blood poured out on the Cross purchased our salvation, washed clean the robes of the martyrs, and gave birth

to the Church as it flowed from his wounded side. The Precious Blood of Christ — now pulsing through his Mystical Body — continues its salvific work, preserving and purifying, repairing and providing nourishment for regeneration and renewal of its members.

May the Precious Blood of Jesus sustain us as we journey to our true home, with Mary and the angels as our companions on the way. ☐

## FEASTS FOR JULY

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of July are:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Alphonsus Liguori, Memorial                               | 20 Apollinaris, Opt. Mem.                      |
| 2 Eusebius of Vercelli; Peter Julian Eymard, Opt. Mem.      | 21 Lawrence of Brindisi, Opt. Mem.             |
| 3 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday                | 22 Mary Magdalene, Memorial                    |
| 4 Independence Day (USA), Opt. Mem.                         | 23 Bridget, Opt. Mem.                          |
| 5 Anthony Mary of Zaccaria; Elizabeth of Portugal Opt. Mem. | 24 Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday |
| 6 Maria Goretti, Opt. Mem.                                  | 25 James, Feast                                |
| 9 Augustine Zhao Rong and companions, Opt. Mem.             | 26 Joachim and Anne, Memorial                  |
| 10 Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday                | 29 Martha, Memorial                            |
| 11 Benedict, Memorial                                       | 30 Peter Chrysologus, Opt. Mem.                |
| 13 Henry, Opt. Mem.   | 31 Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday  |
| 14 St. Kateri Tekakwitha (USA), Memorial                    |  |
| 15 Bonaventure, Memorial                                    |  |
| 16 Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Opt. Mem.                      |  |
| 17 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday                |  |
| 18 Camillus de Lellis (USA), Opt. Mem.                      |  |

The feasts of St. Thomas the Apostle (July 3), St. Sharbel (July 24) and St. Ignatius of Loyola (July 31) are superseded by the Sunday liturgy. ☐

### OUR CENACLE CORNER

*Seeking a deeper relationship with God  
through meditation of passages from Holy Scriptures*

#### BEING PLUCKED OUT OF THE NET

PSALM 25:15

PROVERBS 1:17

2 CORINTHIANS 11:14

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

## WHO REALLY WAS MARY MAGDALENE?

*By Fr. William Saunders  
Arlington Catholic Herald, July 22, 2004*

Controversy over the identity of St. Mary Magdalene has continued since the early Church. In the Gospels, there are three particular "characters" involved in the controversy: Mary Magdalene, a follower of our Lord (Jn 20:11-18); the anonymous penitent woman (Lk 7:36-50); and Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus (Lk 10:38-42). In the West, particularly since the time of Pope St. Gregory the Great, the three characters have all been identified as St. Mary Magdalene. However, in the East, the three characters have remained separate, with St. Mary Magdalene and "St. Mary of Bethany" having separate feast days. St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas all refrained from making a final decision.

So, why would Pope St. Gregory fuse the three "characters" together? First, we need to examine the specific references to the woman named "Mary Magdalene" recorded in the Gospels. She was one of the women who accompanied Jesus and the Apostles: "The Twelve accompanied Him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and maladies: Mary called the Magdalene, from whom seven devils had gone out, Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, Susanna, and many others who were assisting them out of their means" (Lk 8:1-3). (The Gospel of St. Mark confirms that our Lord had expelled seven demons from Mary Magdalene (16:9).)

Mary Magdalene also stood at the foot of the cross during the crucifixion (confer Mk 15:40, Mt 27:56 and Jn 19:25). She also witnessed Christ's burial, and on Easter was the first to discover the empty tomb and then the first to see the risen Lord (confer Jn 20:1-18).

Given the specific references to "Mary Magdalene," the second step is to examine whether Mary Magdalene may also be the penitent woman found in the Gospel of St. Luke (7:36-50). Remember the penitent woman entered the home of Simon the Pharisee. She wept, and her tears fell upon our Lord's feet. She anointed His feet with perfumed oil and dried them with her hair. Simon the Pharisee said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, He would know who and what sort of woman this is that touches Him — that she is a sinner," an obvious reference to her being "untouchable" because of such a serious sin as adultery, fornication, or promiscuity. In the end, Jesus forgives the penitent woman.

This scene is part of Jesus' ministry in the area of the Sea of Galilee. Also, right after the declaration of forgiveness in the seventh chapter of the Gospel of St. Luke, Mary Magdalene is mentioned by name as a follower of Jesus and identified as the one "from whom seven devils had

gone out" (Lk 9:1-3). Keep in mind that Magdalene is derived from Magdala. Magdala, located along the Sea of Galilee near Tiberias, was a wealthy city known for its prosperous fisheries. The Romans destroyed the town because of its moral depravity and its participation in the Jewish revolt. Interestingly, in the Talmud, from the word Magdalene is derived the expression "curling women's hair," which means "adulteress." Even though the penitent woman of Luke 7 is not specifically identified as the Mary Magdalene "from whom seven devils had gone out" of Luke 8, one could easily draw the conclusion, as did Pope St. Gregory. Moreover, the early Church tradition has also upheld this connection.

The third and more difficult step to the investigation is to see if Mary Magdalene could indeed be Mary of Bethany. Following Luke 8, the gospel in the 9th and 10th chapters relates such stories as the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, the Transfiguration, the exorcism of a possessed boy and teachings about discipleship. Our Lord then traveled to "a village" (i.e. Bethany, although not specified by Luke) to the home of Martha, who "had a sister named Mary" (confer Lk 10:38-42). There Martha prepared a meal for our Lord.

While the Gospel of St. Luke does not specifically identify Mary Magdalene with Mary of Bethany, the Gospel of St. John helps resolve the issue. In John 12:1-11, Jesus arrived at Bethany, "the village of Lazarus whom Jesus had raised from the dead." Martha served a meal. Mary anointed our Lord's feet with perfume and dried his feet with her hair. Keep in mind this is a different scene than the anointing by the penitent woman in the home of Simon the Pharisee in Luke 7; nevertheless, the same kind of action in both scenes helps suggests the same actor, namely Mary Magdalene.

Moreover, in John 11, the earlier scene where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the Gospel reads, "There was a certain man named Lazarus who was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary whose brother Lazarus was sick was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and dried His feet with her hair" (Jn 11:1-2). Here Mary is identified as "the one who anointed the Lord." While some speculate that this identification in John 11 refers to the subsequent anointing in John 12, why would John need to make such a reference when the story of John 11 flows right into the story of John 12? More likely, the identification refers to a previous action, namely the story at the home of Simon the Pharisee.

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## THE MESSAGE OF SAINTS LOUIS AND ZELIE MARTIN

By Suzie Andres

October 19, 2015

[www.catholicexchange.com](http://www.catholicexchange.com)

Until yesterday, Louis and Zelig Martin were simply the parents of the greatest Saint of modern times and youngest Doctor of the Church, St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Granted, being the parents of a great Saint is something, but we must not settle for that: we must become great Saints ourselves, and as of yesterday, World Mission Sunday, Louis and Zelig have done it, with a bit of help from their mother and ours, the Church.

While I don't want to argue politics (within or without the City of God), I do want to emphasize a point that bears on the state of the world and the Church today. As St. John of the Cross put it in his Sayings of Light and Love, "The Lord has always revealed to men the treasures of His wisdom and His spirit, but now that the face of evil more and more bares itself, so does the Lord bare His treasures the more."

These treasures are the Saints, and the Church delights in presenting them to us not only for our edification, but more especially for our imitation, and so they can become our best friends.

The only problem is that once the Church canonizes someone (or Some Two, like she did yesterday), by that very fact they take on a glamour that seems to put them beyond our reach. Consider John Paul II and Mother Teresa, for instance.

You may say they are huge saints, and ones we can't easily imitate: few of us will be Pope (thank the good Lord), few of us will found a religious order...And yet before we realized they were out of our league, John Paul and Mother Teresa were quite certainly among us, physically at least. It's a safe bet that everyone reading this piece has either met one of them personally or knows someone who has. Just a few years ago I decided I was the only person I knew who didn't have a framed picture of JPII and me hanging in the living room or the hall or the bathroom (as if my friends were saying "Hard to find room for all the pictures of The Holy Father and Me").

Granted, on my fridge I have a snapshot of Mother Teresa from the day I met her, but that only proves my point, which is that these two lived in our midst, and that's a terrific boost launching us over the first obstacle the devil sets between us and them—the insidious idea that they could hardly have lived, they were so holy. In

the case of these two, thankfully we have photographic evidence they did live, and lived among us, although we're still faced with the problem of their greatness. A good problem for them to have, but for us, that greatness sets them apart. It takes another Great (or so we think) to imitate them successfully, let alone become their friends. Which leaves us alone with our less-than-greatness.

Enter our newest Saints, utterly imitable, with all the freshness and liberty of the Holy Spirit.

Louis and Zelig's message isn't new; it's the same message their daughter has been spreading so handily for the last 120 years, the message of the Gospel. But if we ask where Saint Thérèse learned her little and very ordinary way of sanctity, the answer comes back from the

Church: she learned it first in the home of her parents, whose way was absolutely ordinary.

Not for Louis and Zelig to become Popes or found religious orders. Far from it: they both attempted religious life when they were young; with their ardent desire for sanctity it was their

first choice, but God had other plans. Louis did not make the cut as a monk, nor Zelig as a nun, and so they met and married. They decided at the outset to live a celibate life together; that didn't last long either—a priest instructed them to be normal married folk and raise up a family for God. They went with that and prayed for sons so they could give God priests after His own heart; He decided to take their two sons to Himself in infancy, thus ending that dream.

Did ever two Saints look so like us in their unrealistic quests for holiness? Perhaps we haven't aimed for such heights, but I don't think we're all that different from Louis and Zelig, say when we give up chocolate for Lent and barely last through Ash Wednesday before our spiritual director (or more likely our husband or BFF) tells us we have never been more irritable and to just eat chocolate, for Heaven's sake, and give up something easier, like gossiping or our second latté of the day...

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# GOD TOUCHED ME

## TO HIM WHO IS AFFLICTED

... for the hand of God hath touched me

Job 19:21

By Gary Sheets

The changes in my health and the changes in my prayer are a reflection of my renewed relationship with God The Father, through His dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Prayer used to be done in a specific place and time. Sometimes, it was in the way of living. Now, it is a time to spend with God; to thank Him profusely for my life and blessings and to earnestly request for His love, mercy and compassion to see me through my sufferings. I now look forward to prayer. It is rewarding all by itself. I cherish my prayer time with God more each day.

In handling my medical challenges, I reflected on everything in my life. The highest priority is everything about God. I look up to the Church to definitively answer the most basic questions, beliefs or claims about God, life and death. I challenged the ideas and truths that relied merely on faith.

My renewed interest in prayer answered these basic questions through a profound internal presence of God in the Eucharist. The enrichment of spirit, deepening of knowledge and unraveling of truths through the Holy Scriptures are unmistakably within me. The partaking of the most precious Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ is very consoling and is a positive re-enforcement of love and understanding, peace and hope.

God's promise of everlasting life in His Kingdom in heaven, through His dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ are manifested clearly in the Gospels of John 12: 44-50 and John 14: 1-7; to quote:

"John 12: 44-50 – Jesus cried out and said. "Whoever believes in me not only believes but also in the one who sent me, and whoever sees me sees the one who sent me. I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in the darkness. And if anyone hears my words and does not observe them, I do not condemn him, for I did not come to condemn the world but to save the world. Whoever rejects me and

does not accept my words has something to judge him: the word that I spoke, it will condemn him on the last day, because I did not speak on my own, but the father who sent me commanded me what to say and speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. So what I say, I say as the Father told me."

"John 14, 1-7 – "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where I am going you know the way. Thomas said to him, "Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

The Word of God from these Gospels are everything I look for, believe in and know as Truths.

The more you believe the more questions there are. But to KNOW the most basic most important answers are like knowing the difference between 0 and 1.

We need to think and live with what we know. Stop seeing hearing and being told to "believe". I do not believe. I know. And to know frees me from all speculation. Jesus gave us a way to heaven and everlasting life with God. Amen. This I know. Now day to day, hour to hour we can rejoice and love Jesus, praise God, revel in the grace of the Holy Spirit and smile at everyone and everything which God has created in this world. Love is the culmination of Our Savior's message, and the best way to spread the message is so basic and simple, just smile. A smile is the best outward expression of love. ☐

# SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

## LIVING IN THE PRESENT INSTANT

*Venerable Father Francois-Marie-Paul Libermann*

[www.catholiceducation.org](http://www.catholiceducation.org)

Be docile and pliable in the hands of God. You know what you must do to achieve this.

Keep yourself at peace and in complete repose, never become upset and never trouble yourself about anything, forget the past, live as though the future does not exist, live for Jesus in every moment that you are living, or, better, live as though you have no life in yourself, but allow Jesus to live in you at His leisure; to walk thus, in all circumstances and in all encounters, without fear or worry as is becoming the children of Jesus and Mary; never think of yourself voluntarily; abandon the care of your soul to Jesus alone, etc.

It is He who takes the soul by force; it belongs to Him. It is therefore up to Him to take care of it because it is His property. Do not fear so much the judgment of such a tender master.

Generally speaking, banish all fear and replace this feeling with love; in all of this, act gently, sweetly, steadily, without haste, without anger.

Walk in this fashion in all graciousness, abandonment and complete confidence. The time of this exile will end and Jesus will belong to us and we to Him.

Then each of our tribulations will be a crown of glory for us that we will place on the head of Jesus, because all glory is His alone.



### Acknowledgement

Venerable Father François-Marie-Paul Libermann. "Living in the Present Instant." this passage was translated directly from the French edition of *Lettres du Venerable Pere Libermann* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1965).

This excerpt appeared in *Searching for and Maintaining Peace* by Father Jacques Philippe.

### The Author



Venerable Father François-Marie-Paul Libermann (1804-1852) was a 19th-century Jewish convert to Catholicism who was a member of the Spiritan order. He is best known for founding the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary which later merged with the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. He is often referred to as "The Second Founder of the Holy Ghost Fathers". He was declared venerable in the Roman Catholic Church on 1 June 1876, by Pope Pius IX.

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# SPIRITUAL ARMY NEWS DISPATCH

## THE ARMY CELEBRATES FEAST DAY OF OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

The Spiritual Army of God the Father, Las Vegas chapter, sponsored the Feast Day celebration of Our Mother of Perpetual Help on June 25, 2016 at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church.



More than a hundred devotees of Our Mother of Perpetual Help from St. Francis de Sales and other parishes in Las Vegas attended the celebration.

At 1:00 PM, the celebration started with a solemn and heartwarming procession of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, while the people stood up and raised their statues, icons and images of Mother Mary under different titles. This was followed by hymns, recitation of prayers, crowning of the icon, and floral offering. Then, the Liturgy of the Mass was officiated by Fr. Bruno Mauricci assisted by Deacon

Felipe and Seminarian Mauricio. After the mass, the priest blessed all the statues/images/icons of our Blessed Mother.

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## IT'S OUR 8<sup>TH</sup> YEAR IN OUR LA HOME

It was on July 5, 2008 when The Spiritual Army of God the Father set foot at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master. Prior to this date its devotions were held in the private residence of one of



its devotees, where 30 members were accommodated comfortably. As we grew in number, we knew we needed a bigger home!

Thank you Sisters of the Divine Master for taking us in! Sr. Joanne Mendez – we will forever keep in our hearts all the support you have and continue

to give us from the very first day of your warm welcome. Thank you Spiritual Army for your endless generosity and unconditional support!

*Let us continue to face the future filled with great hopes and great things, for great are the plans of God for all of us! (Isiah 25:1) □*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### TOY DRIVE FOR THE LOS ANGELES CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

PLEASE DROP OFF  
YOUR NEW UNWRAPPED TOYS EVERY 1<sup>ST</sup>  
AND 3<sup>RD</sup> SATURDAYS AT THE CONVENT  
OF THE SISTER DISCIPLES OF  
THE DIVINE MASTER

### DEVOTION SCHEDULE FOR THE MONTH OF JULY IN LOS ANGELES

1<sup>ST</sup> FRIDAY IS MOVED TO JULY 8, 2016

1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY IS MOVED TO  
JULY 10, 2016

1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY IS MOVED TO  
JULY 16, 2016

800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION  
JULY 30, 2016

### FEAST OF GOD THE FATHER

THE HOLY OCTAVE  
OF CONSECRATION TO  
GOD THE FATHER BEGINS  
ON JULY 31, 2016.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 2016

THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS  
ON CARMEN & GOWER  
IN LOS ANGELES AT 12:30 PM

ST. BRIDGET CATHOLIC CHURCH  
220 N. 14<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
IN LAS VEGAS AT 11:00 AM

### PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY LAND & JORDAN

DECEMBER 5-15, 2016  
DAILY ACTIVITIES AND OTHER  
INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT  
[WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG](http://WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG)

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## **THE AMERICA I ONCE KNEW**

Our country is in a state of moral decay and confusion. We have forgotten that we are a Christian nation founded on Christian principles. Everyone who respects our laws is free to worship as they choose in America, but we are going out of our way to cater to radical Muslims bent on our destruction and atheists demanding that God be removed from the public square. We are confused about the meaning of tolerance and watch idly as the Pandora's Box of critical issues such as marriage, abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research, gender identification and religious freedom has been unleashed, redefined or torn apart before our very eyes. America is talking to its enemies (the Muslim Brotherhood), turning its back on our friends (Israel), and failing to lead globally on multiple fronts. If I were an ally of the U.S., I would seriously wonder if I could count on America during a crisis. We have been living on credit for years and the bill is now coming due for us, our children and our grandchildren. We are adrift and need to get back on track.

Change will not happen in this country unless we eliminate the gray area around moral issues, look beyond petty bickering, accept the inevitability of sacrifice and proudly embrace what was (and still can be) great about America. First and foremost, we should fall on our knees and humbly thank God, our Creator, for the blessings in our lives and ask for forgiveness and guidance for the challenging days ahead. Humbly, I offer this checklist for consideration. If the majority of average people like us committed to these actions, we might help return our great nation to the right path:

- Love and serve God. Place Him first in our lives. Fight back efforts to remove God from the public square.
- Be a people of prayer. Prayer is the catalyst that changes everything.
- Teach our children to have faith in God, embrace lives of virtue and have a strong work ethic.
- Protect all life from the moment of conception to natural death.
- Act out of selfless love towards all, especially the least fortunate among us.
- Uphold the sanctity of marriage as being between a man and a woman.
- Trust parents and not the schools to provide our children with sex education.
- Hold teachers more accountable to teach well and to teach the truth.
- Live within our means. Families and local/state governments have to balance their checkbooks, why shouldn't the federal government?
- Demand straight talk and high ethical standards from our leaders.
- Encourage excellence, competition and the American Dream. Artificially leveling the playing field and redistributing wealth is socialism. This is proven to be a failed model and it will not work. Been to Europe lately?
- Only vote for politicians who embrace the above and hold them accountable. We have to speak up, write to our leaders, show up at town hall meetings, etc. Get their attention!

- Be active in the community and make a difference on behalf of worthy causes. Teach our kids to do the same.
- Speak up and act when we see wrong. Don't cooperate with evil.
- We may have differences, but we are still Americans. Let's be civil when engaging in discussions about sensitive issues. This doesn't mean giving in...just being a respectful listener, even if you don't agree.
- Understand that tolerance is NOT a virtue. If we accept everything, we believe in nothing.

My message is merely a reflection on the vast challenges we have in our country and is not meant to be a cure all. We are blessed in this country to have so many opportunities and freedoms, but we need to be vigilant in defending them. As we celebrate Independence Day, let us remember the price our Founding Fathers paid to establish this great nation and the obligation and duty we have as Americans to live up to the heroic ideals they set forth. Many people have voiced that they want America, the Constitution and our institutions to change to suit the demands of the "modern world." Perhaps we citizens of the United States should instead more persistently follow the Constitution and return to the lessons of long ago for guidance on how to live up to our responsibilities in supporting our country. We have big problems in front of us, but with God in charge and a determined spirit on our part, we will overcome them and help return America to greatness.

God bless and Happy Independence Day! ☐

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Mr. Randy Hain is President of Serviam Partners Consulting/Coaching ([www.serviampartners.com](http://www.serviampartners.com)) and actively serves on a number of non-profit boards in the Atlanta community. He is the Senior Editor for the Integrated Catholic Life™ which he co-founded with Deacon Mike Bickerstaff in 2010. Randy is a co-founder of the Annual Atlanta Catholic Business Conference, the Catholic Business Cafe and leads the St. Peter Chanel Faith at Work Ministry. A convert to the Catholic Faith in 2006, Randy and his wife have been married for 20 years and have two teenage sons.

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*Continued from Page 3*

## **WHO REALLY WAS MARY MAGDALENE**

If this argument holds, then Mary Magdalene, the penitent woman, and Mary of Bethany are the same. Granted, we are still left with a little mystery. Nevertheless, I personally agree with Pope St. Gregory, who concluded, "She whom Luke calls the sinful woman, whom John calls Mary [of Bethany], we believe to be the Mary from whom seven devils were ejected according to Mark" (Homilies on the Gospels). St. Mary Magdalene, the repentant sinner, who found both forgiveness and friendship with our Lord, who stood faithfully at the foot of the cross, and who saw the risen Lord, is a powerful example for each believer.

As far as The Da Vinci Code is concerned, what one cannot construe is some of the misconceptions they erroneously present: for instance, that Mary Magdalene was the wife of Jesus, the mother of Jesus' child, a participant at the Last Supper, His prophetic successor and a priestess. Such conclusions, despite the best efforts of historical revisionists who distort the Gospel to meet their political objectives, have no foundation in sacred Scripture, sacred tradition or factual history.

While the revisionists cite the "gnostic gospels," these were rejected from the official canon of sacred Scripture because they lacked apostolic authorship, were heretical and contained fictitious stories. One cannot counter Church tradition with spurious evidence from the gnostic gospels.



Lastly, the book cites several individuals who have accused the Church of "a smear campaign" to discredit Mary Magdalene so as to disempower a powerful woman. Oh please! What greater honor could the Church grant than by recognizing Mary Magdalene as a saint and a model for every sincere Christian who struggles for holiness? Pope St. Gregory realized Mary Magdalene's beautiful example: a woman who found new life in Christ, not a woman who found a self-empowered political agenda. Frankly, more people ought to spend their time reading the Bible, the fathers of the Church and the Catechism instead of such bogus print as The Da Vinci Code. □

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## **MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP**

A procession to the Monsignor LaVoy Hall followed with the devotees singing Ave Maria. A potluck reception was shared by everyone after Fr. Bruno did the invocation.

This celebration is the people's way of giving thanksgiving for answered prayers, asking for the Blessed Mother's powerful intercession, or simply, paying homage to Our Lady under the special title of Mother of Perpetual Help.

The fiesta celebration coincides with the 150th Jubilee of the entrusting of Our Lady's icon by Pope Pius IX to the Redemptorist Fathers, when he told the Redemptorist Superior General: "Make Her known throughout the world!"

On June 23, 1867, the image was granted a Canonical Coronation ("crowning" of the image) by the Holy See as well as official recognition under its present title. The Redemptorist priests are the only religious order entrusted by the Vatican to protect and propagate a Marian religious work of art.

The weekly novena masses observed in different parishes are an old tradition rooted from the Wednesday public novena established by the Redemptorist Fathers in 1948 at the church in Baclaran in the Philippines. □

*I am with you if you perform the will of my Father. It's not the works of heaven to destroy and do acts of malicious intentions to impose ones belief in God's behalf. My ways are always peaceful that result to truth.*

*My children, evangelization of my words must be done in peaceful accord with everyone who seeks the truth and love for God. My way may seem to start in a sense of disarray but in the end the pattern of unity and peace will always prevail.*

*Seek the truth that comes from Me and distinguish the deception of this truth that comes from the evil one."*

*Jesus of Nazareth,  
Your Loving and Peaceful God  
06182016*

## **Prayer to Overcome the Spirit of Jezebel**

*Eternal Father, help me start seeing myself as a mighty soldier in your Spiritual Army. You have provided every weapon I need to prevail against the spirit of Jezebel and the enemies that come against my life, my family, my business, my friends, my church and my ministry. I want to stand tall and firm against the wicked plots the devil tries to exert against people's lives whom I love and need. Holy Spirit of God, give me the power and strength I need to successfully resist every attack of Jezebel's spirit and to drive all dark forces from my life and from the lives of those close to me! I pray this in Jesus' name.  
Amen.*

## THE MESSAGE OF SAINTS LOUIS AND ZELIE MARTIN

This may sound like dumbing down the Saints, but I think we need to stop helping the devil raise them beyond the recognizable. Our new Saints are quite near to us, and because so near, how very normal they seem! And yet how quickly, if we don't immediately seize their coattails and apron strings, they will recede with the other Saints to the highest heavens. So before they escape us, before the devil finds a way to convince us they are unlike us, let us reach up, ever so slightly up, and take Zelig and Louis into our hearts -- Saints Zelig and Louis to be sure, but remember, two days ago they were merely blessed, and who among us isn't blessed?

Louis and Zelig Martin to hold onto Zelig and Louis before fame and their new titles lift them beyond recognition, start with their letters in the indispensable volume *A Call to a Deeper Love: The Family Correspondence of the Parents of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus*. The subtitle is slightly deceptive: true to the feminine genius (garrulity) and the masculine genius (brevity) of the authors, the book consists of over 200 letters by Zelig and merely 16 by Louis. In fairness to Zelig, and evidence of her sanctity, only four are addressed to her husband; the rest she wrote mostly to women who were, no doubt, as fascinated by the details of her day-to-day life as she was.

The message of Saints Louis and Zelig Martin is simply this: Sanctity is not beyond our reach -- it is Christ's doing, and He thirsts to do it in us. The Church will not rest until she gets this message through our very thick heads: the saints were human like we are, and we need not be daunted by their greatness. It is just such greatness that Jesus has in mind for us, the greatness of the little ones. Without Him, we are nothing, and when He makes us great, it is simply His greatness shining forth in us.

Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman said he wasn't impressed by talk about the Saints, but by reading their own words, especially in their letters. Here, then, is one of Zelig's. I don't offer her most saint-sounding letter, but one in which she sounds like us -- she is like us -- so that we may be inspired to turn the tables and become just like her.

To her brother, Isidore Guerin

*September 5, 1871*

*It's been such a long time since you've written. I'm worried about you, especially about your wife. How is she? And the children? And you, are you still working as much? Is your business going well? Mine wouldn't be going too badly if I dared to throw myself into it, but I'm always afraid. However, I did sell three thousand francs worth of Alençon lace last month.*

*My children are wondering a great deal if I'm going to be a godmother soon and if it will be during the holidays, so I can bring them to the baptism?*

*Yesterday we went for a carriage ride six leagues from Alençon. We didn't have much luck because it rained almost the entire afternoon. Marie was very upset that we spent our money and didn't have a good time!*

*I'm already accustomed to the house on the rue Saint-Blaise. If you knew how much I long for you to come and see us here! So when will you bring the three little girls? You mustn't let my prediction frighten you because I've noticed that things always turn out opposite from what I think will happen. So I don't trust myself and my ideas, above all when they're about important things.*

*What's taking place at the moment is that I'm having a discussion with Louis regarding a business matter that I'd like to share with you. You know that he sold his *Crédit Foncier* stock because I pleaded with him. Now it happens that we were too impatient. The stock rebounded quite a bit. If we'd waited until now, we would have lost twelve hundred francs less. Well, it's done. But what bothers my husband the most is to have our money doing nothing.*

*This morning, while reading the newspaper from the Stock Exchange, I saw Pontifical bonds. Right away I thought that these should be excellent later on because I firmly believe in the imminent victory and restoration of the Holy Father to his States. If this happens, it seems to me that this would be a very good investment. So tell me, please, what you think about it. Louis is undecided on the matter. I press him continually. I know I could make him decide, but I wouldn't want him to have only my advice. He doesn't know that I'm consulting you on this. However, he has great trust in you and will do what you recommend.*

The combox is open. Give me your excuses for not being a saint so I can talk you back into the project. In the words of the daughter of Saints Louis and Zelig Martin, "The poorer you are, the more Jesus will love you. He will go far, very far, in search of you, if at times you wander off a little." We are very poor indeed, just like Zelig with our business matters, our buying and selling, our concerns for the Church and the Holy Father. Saints Louis and Zelig and little Thérèse, pray for us! ☐

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Suzie Andres lives and writes in sunny Southern California, although her new webpage at [suzieandres.com](http://suzieandres.com) hails from Australia. She is the editor of *Selected Sermons of Thomas Aquinas McGovern, S.J.*, and author of *Homeschooling with Gentleness*, and *A Little Way of Homeschooling*.

Her debut novel is *The Paradise Project*, whose heroine loves Jane Austen almost as much as Suzie does.

NOTE: A second-class relic of Saints Zelig and Louis presented at Les Buissonnets -- St. Therese's family home in Lisieux, to a devotee during The Spiritual Army of God the Father's 2014 Pilgrimage, will be available for veneration at our 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotion scheduled on July 16, 2016.

# THANK YOU

*... a small and simple phrase that comes from a grateful heart!*

*Psalm 106:2*

## THE 800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father acknowledges with thanks our generous May sponsors of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion. We are grateful that we have merited their partnership and support in providing a venue of spirituality and fellowship for the devotees of God the Father.

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## FOR PRAYERS HEARD AND PETITIONS GRANTED

HOW DO WE RESPOND WHEN OUR CRY FOR MERCY RECEIVES ITS LOVING ANSWER FROM OUR MASTER?

WE NEED TO PRAISE AND THANK JESUS FOR HIS HEALING POWER, MERCY, AND GRACE.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU FELL FACE DOWN AND PRAISED JESUS?

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU PRAISED AND THANKED THE LORD

FOR ALL THAT HE HAS DONE FOR YOU

WITH A GENUINE HEART AND A PROSTRATE POSTURE?

*Thank you Father for making real another of my childhood dreams! Help me to be faithful to you always.*

*- April K.*

*Thank you Lord for Bry's Burp partnership!*

*Praises, honor and glory to You for the continuous positive changes in his life – to a mature and spiritual man; a responsible and caring father to his children. Most of all, Father, thank you for not allowing me to give up praying for him during all those times when I saw no hope for him! Only YOU can bring about such wonderful changes in the most hopeless of Your Creation!*

*- A grateful Aunt*

*We thank God for the successful medical procedure done on my brother, Virgilio. His surgery took about an hour and a half. He is recuperating at the hospital now and we request that you continue praying for his speedy and full recovery.*

*- Isabel A.*

# DEVOTION SCHEDULE



## THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER

cordially invites you to the following devotions:

### IN LOS ANGELES:

#### 1st Saturday Devotion

The Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | 501 N. Beaudry Avenue | (213) 250-7962  
Holy Mass starts at 8:30 A.M. | 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotional Prayers follow.

#### Devotion to God the Father

Every 1st Sunday of the Month | The Monastery of the Angels | 1977 Carmen Avenue on Gower | (323) 466-2186  
12:30 P.M. - Rosary to the Father | 1:15 P.M. - Holy Mass  
2:00 P.M. - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

#### 800 Our Father Devotion – July 30, 2016

at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | starting at 8:30 a.m.  
*Please call Victor at (213) 385-7798 if you wish to become a Sponsor of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion.*

### IN CHINO HILLS:

#### Sacred Heart Devotional Group for Departed Souls

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the Month | 16657 Tourmaline Street | Chino Hills, CA 91709  
Devotional Prayers start at 8:30 P.M.

### IN LAS VEGAS:

#### Sacred Heart and Precious Blood of Jesus Devotion for Departed Souls

Every 1st Friday of the Month  
at The Cenacle House in The Enclave 8455 W. Sahara Avenue #172 | Las Vegas, NV 89117  
Devotional Prayers start at 2:30 P.M.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotion

at Saint Frances de Sales Parish | 1111 Michael Way | Las Vegas, NV 89108 at 8:00 AM  
Devotional Prayers follow.

and

at The Cenacle House in The Enclave | 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, | Las Vegas, NV 89117 at 1:00 PM  
Cenacle will be at 10:00 AM before the devotional prayers.

*Please call Evelyn at (702)274-4315 for entry to The Enclave or for more information.*

#### Devotion to God the Father

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month from 2:00 to 3:30 P.M.  
at The Cenacle House in The Enclave | 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, | Las Vegas, NV 89117

#### 800 Our Father Devotion – July 16, 2016

*Please call (702) 255-9616 or (702) 274-4315 for  
dates and venues for the coming months or for more information or if you wish to Sponsor the Devotion.*

#### Mother of Perpetual Help Novena & Rosary Prayers

Every Wednesday of the week after the 7:30 AM Mass  
St. Francis de Sales Parish | 1111 Michael Way | Las Vegas, NV 89108

### IN THE PHILIPPINES

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion - Metro Manila Area

Letty Rollan has organized the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion in various areas of Metro Manila through the members of the "Mother Butler." Please call her U.S. Vonage phone (510) 779-6652, text her at Manila #916-384-9300, and/or call her Manila landline 939-4677. Mention Mila Lumba's name to be recognized.